

Montana State Fiscal Stabilization Application – Phase 2  
November 30, 2010

Assurance (c) – Standards and Assessment

VI. INDICATORS (c)(4) and (c)(6)

**State Plan Instructions:** For each assurance indicator or descriptor under education reform areas (a), (c), and (d) for which the State is not able to fully collect or publicly report annually the required data or information (as indicated in Part 3A), please attach a plan that provides:

- Indicators: c4 c6

*The process and timeline for developing and implementing, as soon as possible, but no later than September 30, 2011, the means to fully collect and/or publicly report (as required) the data or information, including:*

- *The milestones that the State establishes toward developing and implementing those means;*
- *The date by which the State expects to reach each milestone;*

Milestone	Completion Date	Completed
OPI Measurement and Accountability staff compile assessment data for use in this study	January 2010	✓
OPI assessment director develops study plan	February 2010	✓
Analysis is conducted	February – July 2010	✓
Preliminary findings presented to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)	August 2010	✓
TAC recommendations incorporated into study	October 2010	✓
Final report released	December 2010	
Results presented at OPI Assessment Conference	January 2011	

**Current Status**

The OPI conducts special education compliance monitoring visits that include IEP and file reviews and interviews with teachers and administrators. Supplementary aides and services (accommodations) are reviewed, as part of that process, as to appropriateness and implementation. Accommodations for testing and for instruction are listed separately in the IEP. During the state monitoring visits, the lists are compared for matches. The review team provides recommendations to insure that the two lists match. Schools districts in Montana are monitored on a five-year cycle, and residential facilities that provide special education services are monitored on a three-year cycle. Districts must sign assurances that they comply with all parts of IDEA which include testing and accommodations.

The OPI provides ongoing training and training materials to school districts. The accommodations manual is updated yearly and posted online. Hard copies are sent to each school and school system. The *Spring 2010 CRT Accommodation Manual* is posted at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/Assessment/CRT/TA/10AccommodManual.pdf>

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The manual includes guidance on the parameters for using standard and nonstandard accommodations. Nonstandard accommodations are not allowed under any circumstances for the general student population. When nonstandard accommodations are used for Students with IEP's or 504 Plans or limited English proficient students, the student's results for the content area in which the nonstandard accommodation is used will not be included in the calculations of Annual Measurable Objectives for AYP purposes. The student is also considered a non-participant for the AYP participation rate. (For more explanation, see pages 7 and 16 in the *2010 CRT Accommodations Manual*.)

In the manual, accommodations are keyed with recommendations for their use for students with disabilities and limited English proficient students. A double \*\* indicates accommodations most appropriate for use with students who have an IEP or 504 plan. A single \* indicates accommodations suggested as appropriate for students with limited English proficiency. (For more detail, see pages 12-15 in the *2010 CRT Accommodations Manual*.)

The OPI sends CDs containing Power Point presentations for test administrator training to each school and school system. The Power Point presentations are also posted online.

At the annual OPI Assessment Conference, multiple sessions on accommodations are offered. The program shows the sessions on accommodations. The link to the program for the 2009 assessment conference is: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/PUB/PDF/Assessment/conf/09Agenda.pdf>. The Power Point presentation used at the conference is posted online:

[http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/assessment/conf/Presentations/09Accommodations\\_KRichem.pdf](http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/assessment/conf/Presentations/09Accommodations_KRichem.pdf)

#### **Appropriateness and Effectiveness of Accommodations**

The OPI is conducting studies to determine the appropriateness of accommodations and the impact on test scores for both students with disabilities and limited English proficiency. OPI's Measurement and Accountability division staff will compile the data for the analysis. These studies will be conducted by the State Assessment office and will include an analysis of the use of specific accommodations by content area and by student subgroup. This information will be shared with test coordinators as OPI continues to provide training on the use of accommodations for instruction and assessment. The OPI expects to complete these studies by December 2010 for presentation at the 2011 OPI Assessment Conference.

- *Describe any obstacles that may prevent the State from developing and implementing those means by September 30, 2011, including but not limited to requirements and prohibitions of State law and policy;*

The OPI does not face any statutory requirements, prohibitions or policies that may prevent it from conducting the analysis described in this plan. This project has been incorporated into the work plans of existing agency staff.

- *The nature and frequency of reports that the State will provide to the public regarding its progress in developing and implementing those means;*

The OPI has created a web page where it provides quarterly status reports to the public on the state's progress in meeting the [SFSF program's Indicators and Descriptors](#). In addition, the OPI will be providing semi-annual reports to the interim Legislative Finance Committee on its progress in meeting the four assurances under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

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The first report was provided to the Legislative Fiscal Division in November 2009 and presented to the Legislative Finance Committee in December 2009. The December report is posted at: [http://www.leg.mt.gov/css/fiscal/PM\\_Agency.asp](http://www.leg.mt.gov/css/fiscal/PM_Agency.asp). The next report to the Legislative Finance Committee will be presented in June 2010.

The state assessment office distributes a monthly electronic newsletter to testing coordinators and other interested parties. The [JUMP newsletter](#) will include progress reports on the accommodation studies.

- *The amount of funds the State is using or will use to develop and implement those means, and whether the funds are or will be Federal, State, or local funds.*

The OPI staff members who conduct the analysis of the appropriateness and effectiveness are paid from the existing federal assessment grant and from state general fund monies. No new funds have been identified for this project.

*Furthermore, the plan must satisfy the following general requirements:*

- (A) Describe the agency or agencies in the State responsible for the development, execution, and oversight of the plan, including the institutional infrastructure and describe the capacity of the agency or agencies as they relate to each of those tasks;*

The Office of Public Instruction is responsible for the development, execution, and oversight of the plan. The effort will be led by the State Assessment Director with support from specialists in the Special Education division and the research and analysis managers in the Measurement and Accountability division. The project is within the capacity of the agency to perform. The OPI will solicit input and recommendations from the technical advisory committee for the statewide student assessment.

- (B) Describe the agency or agencies, institutions, or organizations, if any, providing technical assistance or other support in the development, execution, and oversight of the plan, and describe the nature of such technical assistance or other support;*

The technical advisory committee for the statewide student assessment will provide technical support. In addition, the state assessment director will consult with psychometricians on the design of the study.

- (C) Provide the overall budget for the development, execution, and oversight of the plan.*

No new funds have been identified for this project. The staff who work on the project are paid from the federal assessment grant and state general fund dollars.

- (D) Describe the way the State will publicly report the plan and the State's progress reports on its plan, including the nature and frequency of updated reports to the public on State actions taken under the plan and the website where the State will make the plan and*

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*progress reports publicly available (as defined in the Notice of Final Requirements, Definitions, and Approval Criteria for the SFSF Phase II).*

The OPI has created a web page where it provides quarterly status reports to the public on the state's progress in meeting the [SFSF program's Indicators and Descriptors](#). In addition, the OPI will be providing semi-annual reports to the interim Legislative Finance Committee on its progress in meeting the four assurances under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.